

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCHAR 06094 261442Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

UNCLAS BUCHAREST 6094

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: BEXP, RO

SUBJ: FOOD PROCESSING AND PACKAGING EQUIPMENT TSS

REF: (A) USDOC 16831 (B) USDOC 17636 (C) USDOC 17756

1. WE ARE PLEASED WITH DECISION REPORTED REFTEL C TO
BRING TSS TO BUCHAREST.

2. SINCE MINAG OFFICIALS WHO WERE OCCUPIED WITH BUTZ
VISIT WERE MANY OF SAME OFFICIALS WHO COULD GIVE US
PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS OF GOR INTEREST IN PROPOSED TSS,
OUR RESPONSE WAS NECESSARILY DELAYED UNTIL THIS WEEK WHEN
THEY COULD FOCUS ON TSS AND MEET WITH US.

3. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF NOV. 25, VINTILA ROTARU, DIRECTOR
OF DIRECTORATE FOR FOOD INDUSTRIES, AND TWO OF HIS DEPUTIES
GAVE ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE TO PROPOSED TSS. THEY ASSURED
US OF AGMIN SUPPORT IN DRAWING ROMANIANS
FROM MINISTRY, RELATED FOREIGN TRADE ORGANIZATIONS AND
TECHNICAL INSTITUTES. WHILE UNABLE TO GIVE US SPECIFICS OF
PRIORITY AREAS FOR EXPENDITURE OF HARD CURRENTY, ESPECIALLY
BEFORE ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANNUAL AND FIVE-YEAR PLANS, ROTARU
MADE VAGUE REFERENCES TO REVISIONS OF THE PLANS AT THE
LAST MOMENT IN FAVOR OF AGRICULTURE. THOSE REFERENCES
SUPPORT THE EMBASSY'S BELIEF THAT AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT
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PAGE 02 BUCHAR 06094 261442Z

IS GAINING NEW URGENCY AT GOR POLICY LEVEL.

4. ROTARU AND HIS TEAM OUTLINED FOLLOWING SEVEN AREAS AS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST:

A) QUICK PREPARATION FOODS (SUCH AS PUDDINGS AND PIES), FLOUR PRODUCTS REQUIRING LITTLE SUGAR (FOR INSTANCE USING MOLASSES AS SUGAR SUBSTITUTE), AND CANDIES WITH LESS THAN 42 PER CENT SUGAR CONTENT.

B) ALL PHASES OF SOYA PROCESSING - PRODUCTION OF SHORTENING, MIXTURES OF VARIOUS KINDS, ISOLATION AND USE OF PROTEINS, ELIMINATION OF ODOR, EXTRACTION AND UTILIZATION OF RESIDUAL MEAL, SOYA DERIVATIVES, COOKING OIL.

C) MEAT PRODUCTS - PRODUCTION OF PRESERVED AND PROCESSED MEAT SUCH AS DRIED, CRUDE, UNBOILED SAUSAGES. ROTARU WAS LESS SPECIFIC IN ELABORATING ON THIS ITEM, EXPRESSING A VAGUER COMMERCIAL INTEREST IN KNOWING WHAT THE PARAMETERS OF THE AMERICAN MARKET ARE, WHAT NEW PRODUCTS THEY COULD PRODUCE WHICH WOULD SELL THERE, AND WHAT TECHNICAL MODIFICATIONS WOULD BE NECESSARY TO MEET US HEALTH AND PACKAGING STANDARDS.

D) POULTRY - FREEZING OF CHICKEN BY USE OF LIQUID NITROGEN AND OTHER GASES AND THE PACKAGING AND TRANSPORT OF SUCH CHICKEN.

E) FISH PREPARATIONS - CONSIDERABLE INTEREST WAS EVIDENT IN FISH CANNING AND PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY, BALANCED BY DOUBT, HOWEVER, WHETHER AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY IS A WORLD LEADER IN THIS FIELD.

F) DAIRY PRODUCTS - (1) CHEESE - TECHNIQUES FOR PRODUCTION OF COLBY, CHEDDAR, AND OTHER CHEESES WHICH WOULD SELL IN WESTERN EUROPE AND US; (2) POWDERED AND/OR CONDENSED, FORTIFIED MILK FOR CHILDREN.

G) FRUITS AND VEGETABLES - SORTING AND PACKING OF FRESH PRODUCE, CANNING.

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PAGE 03 BUCHAR 06094 261442Z

ROTARU ALSO MENTIONED THAT ALTHOUGH ROMANIAN WINE INDUSTRY IS NOT IN NEED OF MUCH ATTENTION IN ORDER TO SUPPORT BURGEONING SALES, PRODUCTION OF HARD LIQUORS (ESPECIALLY WHISKEY AND GIN) MIGHT BE USEFUL TOPIC.

5. YOU WILL NOTICE THAT EXCEPT FOR FIRST TWO PRODUCT AREAS, FOR WHICH PRINCIPAL CONCERN IS ENLARGEMENT OF DOMESTIC SUPPLY, EXPORT MOTIVES WEIGH HEAVILY IN ROMANIANS' PRIORITIES.

ROTARU WAS EVEN QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT INTENTION WAS EVENTUALLY TO DEVELOP ROMANIA INTO EXPORTER OF QUICK PREPARATION FOODS AND SOYA PRODUCTS. GOR WILL PROBABLY ALLOCATE ITS HARD CURRENCY RESOURCES IN AGRICULTURE FIRSTLY TO THOSE SECTORS WHERE SUCH INVESTMENT WILL BOOST HARD CURRENCY EXPORTS. THE RANGE OF PRODUCTS MENTIONED IN PARA 3 REPRESENTS SOME OF THOSE PRIORITY SECTORS.

6. GIVEN THE ARPIL TIMING OF THE TSS AND THE AGMIN'S ENTHUSIASM, WE BELIVE THAT THE SUB-TOPIC OF FOOD PROCESSING AND PACKAGING EQUIPMENT COULD USEFULLY BE INCLUDED IN OUR FALL FAIR EXHIBITION. FOR GREATER IMPACT, WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT AN EFFORT BE MADE TO RECRUIT COMPANIES FOR THE TSS WHICH INTEND TO PARTICIPATE IN THAT FAIR AS WELL.

7. IN LIGHT OF ABOVE INDICATED GOR INTEREST, WE BELIVE TIME ALLOCATED TO BUCHAREST AS PROPOSED IN REFTEL C TO BE ADEQUATE. SUGGESTIONS FOR SCHEDULING CHANGES FOLLOW IN SEPTEL.

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